

Polish knights definitely show that they were derived from the church music of the Catholic rites. It was during the 16th century that a great surge of interest in the arts gave music its "golden age" in Poland. This "reawakening" in the culture and the humanistic movement was making itself felt all over Europe, but nowhere was it stronger than in Poland where there prevailed a sense of political permanence under the Jagiellonian dynasty (which united Poland and Lithuania) and a growing wealth among the lesser nobility and merchant classes. Alexander I (1501-1506) especially encouraged this movement and employed many composers and musicians in the royal household. It was during this period also that many choirs were formed throughout the country such as the "Kapela Rorantystow" at the cathedral on the Wawel in Krakow and the "Poznan Cathedral Choir" which still exists today.

It was during this "golden age" of Polish music that the forms most familiar to us were introduced. The Polonez is probably the most characteristic manifestation of the music of the Polish people. Its roots may be found in some of the "Kolendy" or Christmas carols sung by bands of wandering minstrels who carried about a marionette theatre called "Szopka", which depicted Biblical scenes interwoven with traditional folk tales. The music of the Polonez was so stirring that it was said to usher in the new kings of Poland as well as during all royal and court festivities. The nobles and their wives, marching to the stately music of the Polonez past the royal seat of King Henry of Valois in 1574, presented such a magnificent spectacle that it gave birth to the dance Polonez. The dance itself is just that, a processional, stately and flowing. Franz List, a great admirer of Polish culture, once wrote of it: "In this form the noblest traditional feelings of ancient Poland are represented." The music is in 3-4 time, usually quite simple and rather martial.

A more lively style of Polish music is in the Mazurka. This is also in 3-4 time, but of a much freer form than the rather confining Polonez. An interesting sidelight about the Mazurka is that, at one time, it was very common for poets to write words for the music or for a poet and composer to collaborate in its composition, making it not unlike our popular songs of today.

The music most closely associated with the people of Poland is the Krakowiak. It is written in 2-4 time and is very quick and lively. This form has not been as popular among the serious composers of Poland, perhaps because there is less chance for variation than in some of the other "folk" forms. A unique feature of this music and dance was the extemporaneous composition of couplets, sometimes tender but more often satirical, which the young man would recite or sing to his partner.

Among the less familiar forms of Polish national music are the "Dumki" (reveries). The Dumki—sad, yearning melodies—were originally accompanied by the guzla which has since been replaced by the bandura and the teobe.

It was Frederick Francois Chopin (1810-1849) who gave the music of Poland to the world. Though his father was French and he himself resided for the greater part of his life in Paris, he always considered himself a Pole, and throughout his wealth of compositions runs the rhythm and feeling of the music of the Polish countryside. Sometimes he made a conscious effort to introduce this national music into his works as in his Mazurkas and Polonaises. In the Mazurkas, one can hear three folkdance types: the Mazur with its accented third beat, the Oberek, smoother but faster and the Kujawiak, slower and more nostalgic and often in minor keys. On other occasions, it seems as though the national music crept into his compositions without his awareness. In many of his works, we find relationship to contemporary political events, while in his "bal-

lades" can be noted the musical representation of Polish Romantic poetry. Chopin was the first to give an artistic dress to Polish folk melodies—melodies which he had heard himself as they were being sung by the Polish common folk.

Although Chopin is by far the best known of all Polish composers and musicians, there are others who likewise deserve recognition. In the field of opera, Stanislaw Moniuszko added the element of folk music and brought forth what has come to be considered the most representative of Polish operas, "Halka". This opera had a vivid effect on the Polish people, for here was operatic music that was not only full of vigor but was Polish both in spirit and character. The opera was indeed flushed with the blood of living drama that held fast to the old Polish folk themes. After "Halka" followed other Moniuszko operas such as "Verbum Nobile", "The Countess", "Straszny Dwor" (The Dreadful Mansion)—each possessing the folk theme and each a masterpiece in itself. Virtuosi seem to abound in Poland—Wieniawski with the violin, Janiewicz as a conductor, and Paderewski on the piano to mention but a few. The most outstanding representative of the modern school is, perhaps, Karol Szymanowski who has made a conscious effort to preserve the primitive, often crude, beauty of the folk melody instead of disguising it in conventional forms.

And so one circle of the spiral is completed, from simple folk theme to simple folk theme but now with a rich background of development behind it that gives these modern serious works an added depth of experience. In Polish music we are given the rare opportunity of being able to follow almost completely the evolution of an art.

CHARM AND LIVELY TALENT OF TAMBURITZANS HAILED

By Charles Hoofnagle

Reporter for Ledger-Dispatch & Star

HAMPTON ROADS - Fortunately those who missed the opening show of the Tamburitians at the Center Theater Thursday night will have chances to see it there tonight at 8:30 or in Portsmouth at the Willett Auditorium tomorrow at the same hour.

This group of students from Pittsburgh, Pa., colleges and universities specializing in folk songs and dances of the Balkan countries in Southern Europe has one of the most charming and lively programs presented in connection with the International Naval Review — or any other time for that matter.

This combination of personality enthusiasm, good looks and talents had the audience of navy men and civilians clapping, shouting and stomping with glee through a fast moving two-hour program that was skillfully prepared, yet seemed impromptu and spontaneous throughout.


The present group is essentially amateur, having been made up from students who are about to enter various private careers after their tour closes, to be replaced next season by a new group. They yield nothing to professionals in the enjoyment they can provide.

The group takes its name from the tamburitza a traditional instrument of Croatia and Serbia, which probably had its origin in the Perian tambura, a member of the mandolin and balalaika family which comes in all sizes from that of the cello down to half a coconut.

There were no programs last night, the entire show being run by a master of ceremonies who was also the conductor and chief Tamburitzan.

The songs were from most of the Balkan — Dalmatia,




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Bosnia, Serbia, Croatia, Albania as well as even Italian and Greek and Turkish — and there was even one sung in French. All the singers and dancers were most attractive personally, obviously enjoying themselves thoroughly, eager to please and delighted with the uninhibited applause they were getting back from the audience.

As a finale they turned American and gave with the rock 'n' roll and other up-to-the minute entertainment which comes to them quite as naturally as to other Americans.

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